



As a steward of our nation's coastal and marine environments, NOAA addresses immediate and long-term environmental threats through its Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R). Scientists are on call around-the-clock to provide the U.S. Coast Guard and other emergency responders with critical information to help minimize environmental damage caused by oil and hazardous chemical spills. Environmental experts assess ecosystems compromised by historic or ongoing contamination and work with other organizations to conduct remediation, restoration, and monitoring of critical natural resources.

Protecting and Restoring Alabama's Coastal and Marine Areas

NOAA trust resources in Alabama include hundreds of miles of coastal ecosystems along bays and estuaries, habitat for shrimp, crabs, oysters, and finfish. However, spills and long-term hazardous waste sites have released chemicals into the coastal zone, contaminating habitats that support the approximately \$450 million per year Alabama fishing industry. The state map on the reverse page shows key response and restoration activities in the past year.

Emergency Response

NOAA provided immediate scientific support to the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and affected states in emergency response efforts following Hurricane Katrina. NOAA responded to six major spills and dozens of smaller spills. NOAA OR&R also provided scientific support for the removal of



Vessels pushed ashore in Bayou LaBatre during Hurricane Katrina

hazardous debris, and is working with the U.S. Coast Guard salvage team to remove over 900 sunken, stranded, and wrecked vessels.

Assessment and Restoration

The Ciba-Geigy Corporation in McIntosh was built in the early 1950s. For many years, wastes from its production of industrial chemicals were dumped into unlined pits on the property. The Tombigbee River and freshwater wetlands are near several former disposal areas, which are subject to periodic flooding by the river. As one of the site co-trustees, NOAA provided technical support for remediation of the contaminated soil and sediment in the floodplain to protect human health and the coastal ecosystem.



Marine debris recovered from Mobile Bay

Marine Debris

NOAA conducts surveys to identify hazards that threaten viable commercial fishing grounds and navigation. NOAA works with the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium to enhance existing community-based marine debris cleanup programs and implement educational programs to foster marine debris prevention. NOAA also provides critical data to support debris removal in areas affected by hurricane Katrina. Maps depicting debris locations and navigational obstructions are now available to regional stakeholders at gulfofmexico.marinedebris.noaa.gov.

Research

NOAA collaborates with other federal, state, and local programs to develop innovative approaches to protecting marine and estuarine environments through research and synthesis of information. The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRC) brings together the resources of a research-oriented university and the field expertise of OR&R to conduct and oversee basic and applied research, conduct outreach, and encourage strategic partnerships in spill response, assessment, and restoration.



NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration—Protecting our Coastal Environment

**For further information about NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration,
please call (301) 713-2989 or visit our Web site at
response.restoration.noaa.gov**

